



"The more we prepare ourselves, the more we learn, the better we are able to teach the children and support the families...the more we prepare the children in our care now, the more they can learn in school. We are giving them a base for later success."

- Andrea Acevedo, Co-Owner
Peladitos, Milwaukee

Home Grown Child Care

From a passion to a career

Andrea and Gerineldo Acevedo's Milwaukee family child care grew from Andrea's passion for working and volunteering with children. It was this passion, despite "not knowing anything" about running a child care business in the beginning, that brought her husband Gerineldo on board, and led them to build their own child care together, "Peladitos." They set out to start their child care in 2009, by researching basic business requirements and enrolling in classes. As they ran their business they attended classes and trainings and worked together with their Technical Consultant (TC), Isabel Coriano, to meet YoungStar requirements. Both found that through this process they were starting to recognize how to better approach teaching and caring for children to get successful outcomes. They understood more about what was driving certain behaviors in children, and what supports would be most effective for their learning. They would frequently take something they learned in class one day, turn around the next day, and use it in the classroom. As a result they started to see positive changes in their classroom environments, the children's behavior, and in how the children learned.

From Theory to Practice

As the Acevedos applied the knowledge they gained through YoungStar to their program, Peladitos flourished along with their education. Currently the Acevedos have each earned 3 credentials and their associate degree, all while running their child care business full time. Peladitos worked up to being a 5 Star program with their original TC, Isabel, and now work with TC Jeanne Labana to maintain quality in their care. They currently have children from ages 1 to 5 enrolled. "[As a child care provider] the first thing you have to have is love for children and then love for what you do," said Gerineldo. "Because this is not easy work." While certainly not easy, it is work that both of the Acevedos love. They refer to the children they care for and their families as their "extended family." When asked what is most rewarding about their job, their response is "everything." As a program they celebrate each child's birthday, holidays, and other important events in the children's lives, and invite families to take part. They have truly taken the term "family child care" to the next level.

Above and Beyond

The Acevedos have taken significant steps over the years to shape their program into the exemplary child care it is today, such as integrating the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards and the Pyramid Model heavily into their environments and approach. They have also continued to find new and unique ways to keep their families engaged while supporting the children in their care. For instance, upon realizing that all of the children in the program had the same family physician, the Acevedos reached out to that physician and asked him to come visit the program. They invited the parents, and the physician spoke with the families about important health care issues regarding their children—such as timely vaccinations and flu shots. This physician now visits on a fairly regular basis to maintain communication with the families regarding their children's health. "The more we prepare ourselves, the more we learn, the better we are able to teach the children and support the families. The more we prepare the children in our care now, the more they can learn in school," said Andrea. "We are giving them a base for later success."

Wisconsin's Stars are Shining

YoungStar informs parents, recognizes quality providers and brings resources and support to programs committed to improving quality. But what it's really all about is helping Wisconsin children shine bright.